

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings of the claims in the application.

Please cancel Claim 5, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3 – (canceled).

4. (currently amended) An apparatus for inserting a slider onto a length of zipper of the type comprising a first profile having a first interlocking member and a second profile having a second interlocking member mated with said first interlocking member, said apparatus comprising:

a guide for receiving a length of said zipper;

a pusher movable in a direction generally transverse to said length of zipper and including a forked member with protruding fins, said protruding fins engaging a portion of said zipper to offset said first interlocking member relative to said second interlocking member in the direction of movement of said pusher; [[and]]

means for guiding a slider over said offset interlocking members of said zipper and urging said slider onto said offset interlocking members; and

wherein said protruding fins border a curved clearance wherein said first interlocking member and said second interlocking member are received within said clearance.

Claim 5 – (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim [[5]] 4 further including a slider loading rack which delivers a continuous supply of sliders to the guiding means.

7. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 6 wherein the slider loading rack further includes a mechanical pawl which urges the sliders to move in the slider loading rack to a mounting location.

8. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 6 wherein the slider loading rack further includes a source of pressurized air fluidly connected to the slider loading rack which urges the sliders to move in the slider loading rack to a mounting location in response to a force of pressurized air from the air source.

9. (previously presented) An apparatus for inserting a slider onto a length of zipper of the type comprising a first profile having a first interlocking member and a second profile having a second interlocking member mated with said first interlocking member, said apparatus comprising:

a guide for receiving a length of said zipper;

a pusher movable in a direction generally transverse to said length of zipper and

including a forked member for engaging a portion of said zipper to offset said first interlocking member relative to said second interlocking member in the direction of movement of said pusher; and

means for guiding a slider over said offset interlocking members of said zipper and urging said slider onto said offset interlocking members;

wherein said forked member includes protruding fins bordering a curved clearance wherein said first interlocking member and said second interlocking member are received within said clearance;

further including a slider loading rack which delivers a continuous supply of sliders to the guiding means, said slider loading rack including a mechanical pawl which urges the sliders to move in the slider loading rack to a mounting location;

wherein the zipper guide further includes a male guide plate and opposing female guide plate, said guide plates being connected to the slider insertion apparatus by an attachment piece with a portion of the attachment piece shaped to hold said zipper interlocked, said male guide plate including a notch defining said mounting location for accommodating a slider within said zipper guide, said notch being positioned along a longitudinal edge of the male plate facing the pusher.

10. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 9 wherein a first end of the notch of the male guide plate continues from a first zipper exiting end to a first protrusion along the longitudinal edge, said first protrusion extending to the pusher to stabilize the first and second interlocking members during movement of said pusher.

11. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 10 wherein said female guide plate includes a first notch opposite the first protrusion of the male guide plate and providing a clearance for the movement of the pusher.

12. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 11 wherein said female guide plate further includes a protrusion opposite the notch of the male guide plate, said protrusion of the female guide plate guiding the length of zipper after slider insertion from said mounting location to an area outside of said male and female guide plates.

13. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 12 wherein the first zipper exiting end of the male guide plate includes a corner chamfered away from a perpendicular axis of the first zipper exiting end with a radius formed at each remaining corner of the male guide plate and wherein the female guide plate includes a second zipper exiting end with a corner chamfered away from a perpendicular axis of the second zipper exiting end with a radius formed at each remaining corner of the female guide plate such that the radial corners of said male and female guide plates prevent snagging of the length of zipper received by said zipper guide.

14. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 13 wherein the male guide plate further includes a second protrusion continuing from the first end of the notch and collinear with the first protrusion of the male guide, said second protrusion providing further alignment of the length of zipper after slider insertion.

15. (original) The slider insertion apparatus in accordance with claim 14 wherein the female guide plate further includes a second notch opposite the second protrusion of the male guide plate.

Claims 16-20 -- (canceled).